



COMMITTEE of the WHOLE

CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES
August 13, 2007
5:00 P.M.
Council Office

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

V. Spencer, S. Fuhs, S. Marmarou, M. Baez, J. Waltman, D. Sterner

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

C. Kanezo, C. Younger, L. Kelleher, A. Mukerji, J. Khokhar, A. Boscov, T. McMahon

I. Community Development Resolutions

Mr. Mukerji explained growing greener funds will support grading and site acquisition for a number of projects. The funds are applied for through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Mr. Mukerji emphasized that City funds are not used at all in support of any of the projects; Mr. Boscov was able to secure the necessary support from DCED. Mr. Boscov reiterated City funds will not be used, all three grants are provided by the governor's office.

Mr. Mukerji took an opportunity to provide Councilman Fuhs with information regarding the reallocation of \$850,000 in unexpended Home Funds. The funds will be used to support the construction of the Goggle Works Apartments.

II. Police Pension

Mr. Younger indicated he was still revising the proposed ordinance. Mayor McMahon asked Mr. Younger to make the revisions a priority. Mr. Younger stated that he had an opportunity to formulate the necessary amendments; however, he was unable to finish amending the ordinance. Mayor McMahon observed the Pension Board has been repeatedly demanding some type of reform.

Mr. Younger requested the opportunity to discuss several discrepancies between revisions recommended by Ms. Kelleher and his own notes. Mr. Younger promised to have a proposal before City Council before the next meeting.

Mr. Marmarou commented that the proposed time buy back provisions were overly generous. Mr. Marmarou felt the City was disadvantaged allowing officers to purchase up to five years of military time. Ms. Kelleher stated officers are able to purchase military time; the typical rate is approximately \$7,000.00 for a five year period, which is approximately what the contribution would have been. Mr. Marmarou repeated his objections.

III. Call Center Review

Mr. Waltman requested postponing the topic until Mr. Churchill and Ms. Palm were present. The discussion would be rescheduled for another time.

IV. Review: Final Housing Permit Process

Mr. Spencer inquired how the proposed housing process could be expedited. Mr. Waltman stated expedited processes would take place when properties were in compliance with the criteria set forth in the ordinance.

Mr. Fuhs looked for reassurance that individuals, specifically property owners, who were working through the process would, along with their tenants, be allowed to remain in the property until the processes concluded. Mr. Waltman and Mr. Sterner agreed that property owners and tenants would be allowed to remain in residence provided, of course, as the application goes through the process. Mr. Fuhs felt better with the assurance provided by Mr. Waltman.

Mr. Spencer questioned if the City could legally request tenant's date of birth. Mayor McMahon stated the landlord could not ask tenants to provide that information. Ms. Kelleher stated the Mayor was correct to a point; while landlords could not make such inquiries of their tenants, the City can. Mayor McMahon, assuming date of birth could be required by the municipality, suggested a system of spot checks would ensure tenants provide date of birth. Mr. Spencer stated the State human relations commission is very clear that date of birth cannot be requested. Ms. Kelleher repeated: date of birth cannot be requested by the landlord; however the municipality can make the requirement.

Mr. Waltman felt comfortable with the overall process, provided the Administration was prepared to implement the necessary criteria in an expeditious fashion. Mr. Khokhar informed Council of the implementation timeline. Mr. Khokhar was confident that Codes and other Administrative offices would be able to begin implementation by early October at the latest.

The members of Council agreed to support the criteria ordinance.

V. RAWA Appointment

As Council had time to discuss issues not listed on the agenda, Mr. Spencer suggested reviewing the open RAWA appointment.

Mr. Waltman thought there had been consensus amongst Council to conduct another series of interviews with all applicants. Mr. Waltman stated that he felt, as the RAWA

appointment was such another important decision, selecting a candidate without having an opportunity to interview the candidates. Mr. Marmarou stated that what Mr. Waltman was proposing went against current procedure. Mr. Marmarou stated the Administrative Oversight Committee already held interviews with all three candidates and a majority of the committee endorsed one candidate.

Mr. Waltman doubted he could support a candidate without having had an opportunity to hold some discussion. Mr. Waltman made it clear he would not vote for any candidate, without first holding interviews. Mr. Fuhs observed that while Mr. Waltman might not have expressed his desire to hold interviews to the body, he did make similar comments in private.

Mr. Spencer observed that there are three options before Council:

1. Hold additional interviews with all three candidates;
2. Table the resolution pending the return of Councilwoman Goodman-Hinnershitz;
3. Vote on the resolution.

Mr. Spencer indicated he would prefer, due to personal experience, to extend Councilwoman Goodman-Hinnershitz the courtesy of waiting until her return. Mr. Fuhs stated he was prepared to vote on the resolution, but would support the decision of the body.

Mr. Marmarou and Mr. Sterner objected to holding additional interviews; however, both indicated Mr. Waltman should feel free to meet with the candidates at his convenience. Mr. Waltman suggested tabling the resolution until Councilwoman Goodman-Hinnershitz returned; this would allow time to hold additional interviews, while respecting the right of a fellow member of Council. Mr. Fuhs and Ms. Baez thought this was the best approach.

Respectfully Submitted

By: _____
Linda A. Kelleher, City Clerk